

VZCZCXRO0385
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #1742/01 3421206
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 081206Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1408
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0176
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 6611
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 4314
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 7675
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 7582
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4179
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 001742

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2009

Media Highlights

Obama: Turkey a Partner; Erdogan A Friend (Hurriyet) Live coverage of Turkish PM Erdogan's meeting with President Obama dominated the Turkish airwaves throughout the evening 12/7 and rules the front pages of Turkey's bombastic print media sector today. Despite somber news of a terrorist attack that left seven soldiers dead in central Anatolia, all major news channels reported live from Washington and hosted panels of experts in the studios with NTV TV fielding correspondents reporting live from Erbil and Kabul. In a front page double banner "Full Consensus at Summit," liberal Radikal zeroed in on Obama's comment that "Turkey can be an important player" in finding a solution to the crisis with Iran. Mainstream Sabah headlines "Turkey is our Guarantee in the Region" and reports that Obama emphasized that as a secular, democratic Muslim majority country, Turkey is able to contribute not only to regional peace but global peace as well. Conservative Today's Zaman notes Turkey's approach has raised Western concerns but for the U.S. "Turkey's blossoming relations with Iran have eased Tehran's isolation as Washington tires to pressure the Islamic republic into a deal." Circulation giant Hurriyet headlined "Vital Partner" and chronicled the deliverables, from cooperation in counter-terrorism and economics, as well as science, art, politics and technology. Islamist-oriented Zaman in "Model Partnership with US Comes True," and other media gave prominent play to the two leader's unified approach to terrorism, and expression of condolences for martyred members of the Turkish armed forces who died in the 12/7 ambush in Topak, noting that PM Erdogan said "Now is not the time to gain enemies, but to make friends." Mainstream Vatan highlights President Obama's comments on the PKK issue as saying "PKK is our Common Enemy but the problem cannot be solved only with military means" and notes the President's praise for PM Erdogan's "courageous steps" in the Kurdish "democratic opening." Hurriyet's senior columnist Sedat Ergin described the meetings as a positive and noted that "White House visits always strengthen the political positions of Turkish leaders. Erdogan will return to Turkey with the wind of gained support from the White House." The paper also notes that at the joint press conference, President Obama concluded by saying "I am very happy to call Turkey a partner and Erdogan as a Friend." Noting that the meeting went on for more than two hours, leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet in "Two Hours Bargaining" reports

that PM Erdogan stressed that necessary steps will be taken in order to re-open the Halki Seminary.

Ambush: 7 Martyrs (Sabah)

All media outlets give extensive coverage to the terrorist attack killing seven Turkish soldiers near Tokat in the northern part of Turkey. Mainstream Hurriyet reports the terrorists took advantage of the foggy weather to attack the gendarme team near the town of Resadiye in Tokat province. Liberal Radikal says the attack fueled tensions as the Constitutional Court starts discussing to disband DTP while at the same time protests in support of Ocalan in East and Southeast are becoming effective in the larger cities. Mainstream Milliyet reports PKK, DHKP-C and TIKKO have carried out activities in the region but there was no immediate indication of who was behind the attack. Mainstream Vatan draws attention to the politics of the region, noting that the Nationalist party MHP, which showed the strongest reaction to the government's Kurdish opening, had 50 percent of the votes in Resadiye. Meanwhile leftist Taraf highlights the timing saying the attack targeted the GoT's democratic initiative on the Kurdish minority and came a few hours before the Erdogan-Obama meeting. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak says the ambush was the latest attempt to undermine tranquility. All papers report Turkish leaders including President Gul, PM Erdogan condemned the deadly attack. Vatan's Columnist Ruhat Mengi in "PM is in the US While the Country is Given Over to Terror" harshly criticizes PM Erdogan as "While Turkey is suffering under terror because of the opening Erdogan initiated by taking the terror organization [PKK] as an interlocutor, the PM and his wife are staying in one of the most luxurious and most expensive hotels in Washington. While the mothers of the seven martyrs of Tokat are

ANKARA 00001742 002 OF 003

crying, TV channels are focusing on Erdogan's meeting by highlighting the two leaders meaningless words and calling each other "my friend, my partner," as if there were any positive results of any of their earlier meetings."

Decision Day for DTP

Turkish media all report that the Constitutional Court will begin debating a closure case against the DTP today. Mainstream Vatan reports that according to the Turkish Constitution, seven votes are necessary in order to close the party and notes that "today it will be decided whether the 219 DTP members, including party chair Ahmet Turk and many mayors, will be banned from the politics. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak says the indictment for the case was prepared by the chief prosecutor two years ago and there are 141 different charges in it against DTP. Vatan columnist Bilal Cetin on 12/8 notes that during the last two years, "DTP officials exerted every effort to support the chief prosecutor's claims and they openly showed that their party was linked to PKK terror organization. Moreover, they ignored the friendly warnings of many actors including the EU Ambassadors, to distance themselves from the terror organization. After all this, a closure decision has a very high possibility."

US Presents 'Country of the Year Award' for Turkey

In "Turkey-US Go Into Model Partnership," mainstream Star newspaper and Turkish wire services report on a new economic partnership announced during the PM Erdogan visit to Washington. As reported in the Turkish-American web portal www.turkishny.com, US Trade Representative Ron Kirk and Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke inaugurated a new "Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation" with Turkey during the Erdogan visit. At the inauguration, Turkish State Minister and Deputy PM Ali Babacan said that "US-Turkish commercial and investment relations were advancing well and there was a potential for improvement." In addition, the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) has announced Turkey as the recipient of the "2009 Country of the Year" award. The agency's statement said, "this award is a reflection on the success of the Agency's program in Turkey supporting their development priorities." USTDA Acting Director Leocadia Zak said "this important award reflects the strong economic relations between Turkey and the US."

Erdogan: Genocide Not in the Family

In his speech at Johns Hopkins University and before he officially launched a new Turkish office in Washington, PM Erdogan said that

lobbying is not enough for resolving the Armenian issue and added "my ancestors didn't and won't commit genocide." He said that claims that Turkey 'shifting its axis' are unfair and emphasized that he expects the Minsk Group to get more serious on the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh, so that both the Azeri-Armenian and Turkey-Armenian conflicts will be resolved. On a question regarding the gas agreement with Iran and whether it's discussed in his meeting with President Obama, Erdogan said "Turkey is against nuclear weapons in the region and nuclear capacity could be used only for peaceful means. Turkey will do its best to resolve the concerns on Iran's nuclear program."

Copenhagen: Useful Result Hard To Get. Stating a common media theme, leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines "An Opportunity the World Must Not Miss" while mainstream Hurriyet in "A Useful Result will be Hard to Get at Copenhagen" more darkly comments that "except for the hope generated by Obama's decision to attend on the last day, there is no evidence that binding and useful decisions will result from the summit." In "Climategate spread from Turkey" Hurriyet continues that the conference is still struggling with the fall-out from the stolen East Anglia e-mails and that the theft, which it suggests was instigated by the Russian Secret Service and spread via Turkish servers, should be called "Pirategate". Mainstream Milliyet headlines "To save the climate, 1200 limousines and 140 planes" but then focuses on previously announced national reduction targets. Liberal Radikal notes in "Release in 12 days of as much CO2 as an African Country" condemns the 321 million TL

ANKARA 00001742 003 OF 003

participant expense and 41 tons of CO2 released at the conference, but continues that the gathering has become "Hopenhagen." Economic daily Referans headlines "Global warming can only be reduced with a 10 trillion dollar investment" in a long detailed article focused on the climate change economics and predicts "large negative results if the summit fails."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- A group of 200 DTP activists rallied in Tunceli and threw Molotov cocktails at bank branches, police cars and shops. Police used teargas to disperse the protesters
- Interior Minister Besir Atalay said government's democratic opening process was continuing but fiercely criticized DTP for fueling unrest in the southeast
- DTP deputy Selahattin Demirtas held a press conference to denounce the killing of a student during protests in Diyarbakir
- Interior Minister Atalay said 119 people were arrested in connection with recent outlawed protests in various parts of Turkey
- Turkey is one of the 13 countries with upgraded credit rating this year
- Turkish banks report 53.7 percent increase in profits this year

World

- Iranian security forces break up anti government demonstrations in central Tehran
- A suicide bomber attacked a court in Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar, killing six and injuring more than 30
- The Azerbaijani Embassy in Ukraine delivers a diplomatic note to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry for airing an anti-Azerbaijani film on TV

SILLIMAN